

# **Minot State University**

## **Student Government Association Constitution**

*Revised April 23, 2024*

### **Article I. Mission**

1. The purpose of Student Government Association shall be to promote the general welfare of the students, increase student involvement within the university, foster communication between students, staff, and administration of Minot State University and provide an official voice through which student opinion may be expressed.

### **Article II. Membership**

1. Officers and senators must maintain a 2.5 cumulative grade point average on a 4.0 scale.
2. Officers and senators must maintain full-time student status.
3. Membership shall consist of all registered students who have paid activity fees to Minot State University, hereafter "MSU." Membership shall be represented by elected and appointed officials of Student Government Association, hereafter, "SGA."
4. No person shall be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity within this organization based on the grounds of race, color, creed, national or ethnic origin, age, sex, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, marital status, disability, source of income, status as a veteran, or other such factors that cannot be considered lawful in admission to, access to, treatment in, or employment in this organization's programs and activities. Inquiries concerning the application of Title IX may be referred to the MSU Title IX Coordinator.

### **Article III. Organizational Structure**

#### **Section 1. The Senate**

1. The Senate shall consist of the following officials:
  - a. Senators
  - b. Officers
    - i. President
    - ii. Vice President of Finance
    - iii. Vice President of Internal Affairs
    - iv. Vice President of State-Affairs

#### **Section 2. Senator Representation**

1. Senators shall consist of:
  - a. One Senator for every 200 students enrolled in each academic college
  - b. One Senator for every 200 students enrolled as Bachelor of General Studies
  - c. Two Senators representing students living on-campus
  - d. Two Senators representing students living off-campus
  - e. Two Senators representing students in the freshman class
  - f. Two Senators representing student athletes
  - g. One Senator representing International Students
  - h. Two Senators representing the student body at large
  - i. One Senator representing graduate students

#### **Section 3. Advisors**

1. Advisors shall be a member of the staff, faculty, or administration.
2. Advisors shall be appointed to two-year terms.
3. Advisors shall be non-voting officials.

## **Article IV. Roles & Responsibilities**

### **Section 1. Responsibilities of the Senate**

1. In general, members shall:
  - a. Uphold appropriate academic and personal conduct to represent MSU and SGA.
  - b. Meet periodically with their constituents and represent them effectively.
  - c. Serve actively on three or more Senate or administrative committees.
  - d. Attend all SGA meetings.
  - e. Attend a majority of SGA-sponsored events each semester.
  - f. Maintain one office hour per week between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 4:30 pm., Monday-Friday, unless otherwise approved by the Vice President of Internal Affairs.
  - g. Present senator report(s) at a minimum of one meeting per month.
  - h. Aid their successor with transitioning into office.

### **Section 2. Officer Roles**

1. The President shall:
  - a. Be the official spokesperson and President of the MSU student body.
  - b. Preside over the Senate and other SGA meetings and functions.
  - c. Call meetings of the Senate as necessary or as directed by the Senate.
  - d. Create the SGA budget with the Vice President of Finance and advisors, with approval of the Senate, based on fees distributed by the SGA Activity Fee.
  - e. Create ad hoc committees as needed, with approval of the Senate.
  - f. Appoint members to committees as necessary with approval of the Senate.
  - g. Appoint members as necessary to fill the senate with approval of the Senate.
  - h. Maintain a minimum of seven office hours a week.
2. The Vice President of Finance shall:
  - a. Be the financial officer of the Senate.
  - b. Perform the duties of the President in the President's absence or upon request.
  - c. Assume the office of President in the event of vacancy.
  - d. Chair the CSO Committee.
  - e. Assist the President and advisors in the creation of the budget and disperse to the Senate.
  - f. Ensure payment of bills and completion of contracts.
  - g. Document an accurate record of collections, disbursements, and allocations.
  - h. Serve as a representative on the Student Fee Committee.
  - i. Maintain a minimum of six office hours a week.
3. The Vice President of Internal Affairs shall:
  - a. Record and publish minutes of Senate, CSO and Constitutional Review meetings.
  - b. Track office hours completed by all members of the Senate.
  - c. Maintain a current schedule of committees and committee members and track member attendance.
  - d. Notify the President of members in violation of membership requirements, and notify the Senate, with approval from the President.
  - e. Organize annual senate pictures.
  - f. Develop internal and external marketing efforts to enhance campus vibrancy.
  - g. Maintain SGA website, social media, and campus calendar.
  - h. Abide by the MSU Institutional Review Board policies when surveying the student body.
  - i. Maintain a minimum of six office hours a week.
4. The Vice President of State Affairs shall:
  - a. Be the direct liaison between MSU SGA and the State North Dakota Student Association, hereafter "NDSA."

- b. Chair the NDSA committee and, as Chair:
  - i. Attend every NDSA meeting.
  - ii. Provide a report to the SGA regarding the NDSA meeting attended.
  - iii. Ensure MSU delegate preparedness.
  - iv. File vehicle requests and book lodging.
  - v. Provide NDSA attendance list to the Vice President of Finance.
- c. Organize an annual State NDSA meeting hosted by the MSU SGA.
- d. Submit a final written report at the last SGA meeting of the year.
- e. Maintain a minimum of six office hours a week.

## **Section 5. Senator Roles**

- 1. Senators representing academic colleges shall:
  - a. Meet with the chair's council of their respective colleges or the Vice President for Academic Affairs and report to the Senate biannually.
- 2. On-Campus Senators shall:
  - a. Maintain a relationship with on-campus residents and represent their needs and concerns at senate meetings as needed.
- 3. Off-campus Senators shall:
  - a. Maintain a relationship with off-campus residents and represent their needs and concerns at senate meetings as needed.
- 4. Freshman Senators shall:
  - a. Be exempt from the GPA requirements for their first semester.
  - b. Maintain a relationship with first-year students represent their needs and concerns at senate meetings as needed.
- 5. Athletic Senators shall:
  - a. Maintain a relationship with student athletes and represent their needs and concerns at senate meetings as needed.
- 6. International Senators shall:
  - a. Maintain a relationship with international students and represent their needs and concerns at senate meetings as needed.
- 7. Senators at Large shall:
  - a. Maintain a relationship with the general student body and represent their needs and concerns at senate meetings as needed.
- 8. Graduate Senators shall:
  - a. Maintain a relationship with graduate students and represent their needs and concerns at senate meetings as needed.

## **Section 6. Advisor Role**

- 1. Advisors shall:
  - a. Provide leadership, guidance, mentorship, and liaisons.
  - b. Facilitate transition of SGA officers and senators.
  - c. Ensure at least one advisor is present at each Senate meeting or provide a proxy.
  - d. Objectively mediate interpersonal conflicts between SGA members.
  - e. Represent SGA in any conflicts with MSU faculty or staff.
  - f. Inform the Senate of infractions of the Constitution or standing rules.
  - g. Call officer meetings as deemed necessary and prudent.

## **Article V. Elections**

### **Section 1. Elections**

- 1. Officers and senators shall be selected through election by the student body or through appointment for one-year terms.
- 2. Full-time students enrolled at MSU, including candidates, may vote in SGA elections.

3. Candidates seeking any officer position must have served as a member of the Senate for one academic year or gain approval of the Senate.
4. Candidates may run for one Officer position and one Senator position but shall only hold one.
5. The interim between election and taking office shall serve as a mandatory training period.

## **Section 2. Campaigning**

1. Candidates may campaign for office.
2. Campaigning materials must be removed from the polling location the day before the polls open.
  - a. Any candidate may receive a 10 percent loss of votes if campaigning or campaign materials are discovered in polling locations while polls are open.
  - b. Any candidate may be disqualified from an election if they or a member of their campaign committee is found to be operating or supervising a polling location.
3. Other campaign guidelines shall be set by the Election Committee, with approval of the Senate.

## **Section 3. Advisors Appointments**

1. The Senate shall appoint or re-appoint Advisors every other Spring Semester in even years following the General Election through a simple majority.
2. In the event of appointing a new advisor:
  - a. The president shall assemble a panel, with the approval of the Senate, charged with appointing no more than two advisors.
    - i. This panel must consist of the President, Vice President of Finance, no less than two senators, and no less than one faculty or staff member.
    - ii. Those appointed shall take office immediately upon appointment.

# **Article VI. Meetings**

## **Section 1. Meeting Guidelines**

1. Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised shall be the parliamentary authority.
2. The Senate shall meet at least two times per month during the academic year, except during vacations and exam periods.
3. One-half of the officer team shall constitute quorum at officer meetings.
4. Two-thirds of the Senate plus one shall constitute quorum at all meetings of the Senate.
5. Except when otherwise noted, one-half of those present plus one shall constitute a majority.
6. All Senate meetings shall be open to the public.

## **Section 2. Attendance of General Meetings**

1. Meeting attendance for senate members is mandatory.
  - a. An excused absence must be requested to the President 48-hours prior to the meeting. If the absence is questionable then the Board will vote whether it is excused or unexcused.
  - b. All members are required to coordinate a proxy to represent them in an absence.
2. If any member is absent without proxy or excusal by the President from three Senate meetings during their term, then that member must meet with the President and Vice President of Finance.
  - a. The President may recommend that the Senate vote on whether to retain that member.
  - b. If the member does not meet with President and Vice President of Finance in a reasonable amount of time, the President may recommend that the Senate vote on whether to retain that member without meeting with that member.
  - c. A two-thirds vote shall be required to remove a member from the senate.
    - i. The member shall have the opportunity to speak on their own behalf.
    - ii. The member may not be present during deliberation and voting, nor vote.
  - d. Removal of members shall be subject to question after the second unexcused absence or tardiness from a mandatory meeting and/ or an event the member agreed to attend.

### **Section 3. Attendance of Officer Meetings**

1. If an officer member is absent without excusal by the President from two officer meetings during their term, then that member must meet with the President and Vice President of Finance.

## **Article VII. Recognition**

### **Section 1. Senator of the Month**

1. Senator of the Month nominations will take place at the first meeting of the month.
2. Senators will only be eligible for nomination if they have completed all their required office hours and have no unexcused absences for that month.
3. Those elected as the Senator of the Month will receive:
  - a. Access to the Senator of the Month parking spot.
  - b. Recognition on all SGA social media platforms.

## **Article VIII. Finances**

### **Section 1. In General**

1. SGA shall be funded through the Student Activity Fee. The senate shall have the authority to utilize the collected monies in such a way that provides a benefit or service to the student body.
2. All contracts and bills related to or paid through SGA funds must have signatures obtained from one officer and one advisory of the SGA.
3. Monies collected from Student Activity Fees will be deposited in an on-campus account.
4. Any changes made past 10% of student fees per semester requires a two-thirds senate vote.

### **Section 2. Payment of Officers**

1. Officers shall be placed on the payroll on April 16th of the year in which they are elected and remain there until April 15th of the following year, unless they vacate their position before that time, whereas salary will be terminated effective the day of resignation.
2. In case of an appointment, the officer shall be placed on payroll the day they were appointed.
3. Any paid position within the Senate will follow MSU employee Guidelines.

### **Section 3. Use of Funds**

1. Acceptable utilizations of these monies may include, but are not limited to:
  - a. Providing on and/or off campus student entertainment.
  - b. Supporting intramural sports.
  - c. Providing monies for legislative affairs.
  - d. Acquiring advertising materials for SGA initiatives.
  - e. Supporting clubs through CSO.
  - f. Compensating officers for their service to SGA and the MSU student body.

## **Article IX. Vacancies, Complaints & Discipline**

### **Section 1. Resignation**

1. Any official who resigns shall not be eligible to hold office again for one year without gaining approval of the officer team.
2. Any member of the Senate may resign by submitting a signed and dated letter of resignation to the President. Letters of resignation shall appear in the next Senate meeting's minutes. If an SGA member should vacate their position, they will be expected to return all tangible items. All SGA Members will be held to this standard unless the student is graduating or has completed their coursework before the end of the academic year. If SGA items are not returned, the cost of these items will be charged to their Minot State University account.

### **Section 2. Vacancies**

1. If a senator position is vacant, the President shall appoint with the approval of the senate.
2. If the office of President becomes vacant, the Vice President of Finance shall assume the position and appoint their replacement from among the members of the Senate. If the Vice President of Finance declines or is unable to fulfil the duties of the President, SGA will facilitate an internal vote to determine next steps.
3. If an officer position becomes vacant, the President shall appoint someone to fill the position among the members of the Senate with the approval of the Senate.

### **Section 3. Recordkeeping**

1. All documentation related to this section will be maintained in the Student Advisor's office and will be maintained in compliance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).

### **Section 4. Complaints**

1. No disciplinary action shall be considered unless a formal, written complaint is submitted by a member of the SGA to the President. If the complaint should be against the President, the written document should be submitted to the Vice President of Finance. Complaints must be as specific as possible, so the charges against the member are clear and understandable. Anonymous complaints will not be accepted.
  - a. If the complaint is regarding the SGA President, the Vice President of Finance shall take on the duties of the President.
  - b. If the complaint is regarding the SGA President from the Vice President of Finance, the Vice president of Internal Affairs shall take on the duties of the President.
3. The member for whom the complaint is against will be provided with a copy of the complaint, excluding the submitter's name. The senator will have three school days to provide a written response. Responses after the specified deadline will not be accepted. The President shall consult with the complainant and the subject senator (separately) to fully understand the relevant issues prior to presenting the complaint to the officer team. The advisors shall be used as consult as needed and may be present at the interviews
4. The officer team will review written statements provided and hear from the President regarding the initial consultation. An advisor will be present during all such meetings. Should the complaint be against an officer, that member will be recused from the process except as the subject senator.
5. The officer team may choose to consider the written documents only or interview anyone with information about the matter. Interviews will not be conducted as a hearing. The officer team will make a recommendation to the President regarding disciplinary action, and the President (in consultation with an Advisor) will implement disciplinary action and document the final decision. The recommendation will be written and include a brief justification and/or reasoning behind it. The President is not required to accept the recommendation of the officer team.

### **Section 5. Discipline**

1. The recommendation regarding discipline may include:
  - a. Dismissal of the charges
  - b. Verbal counseling
  - c. Documented counseling
  - d. Documented reprimand
  - e. Probation
  - f. Suspension with or without pay
  - g. Removal from office
2. The President's final decision will be made in writing and addressed to the subject member with copies to the complainant. With any disciplinary action, the member has the right to attach written comments for the record.
3. With any action that involves the loss of pay or removal from office, the member has the right to appeal the action.
4. When the final decision involves removal from office, the member can resign. If this option is exercised, the right of appeal is forfeited.

## **Section 6. Appeals**

1. Any member subject to disciplinary action resulting in a loss of pay or removal from office may appeal that decision.
2. To appeal, the member must file a written appeal to the President within seven calendar days of the decision. The appeal may not introduce added information that was not previously documented and presented to the officer team.
3. Upon receipt of the appeal notification, the President will convene the full Senate to review and discuss the original complaint, the response provided by the member, the officer recommendation, and the President's final decision. Senate members may make inquiries of the President to ascertain relevant facts of the matter. A motion to overturn the disciplinary action must be made by an SGA member and then seconded. A two-thirds vote of or no second is made then the appeal will not be overturned.
4. If the disciplinary action is overturned, all loss of pay will be reinstated, if applicable. If a removal action is overturned the member will return to office.
5. A lesser form of discipline may be implemented based on a separate motion passed by a simple majority of the Senate.

## **Articles X. Committees**

### **Section 1. In General**

1. SGA Representatives shall report to the Senate regarding standing committees.
2. Ad hoc committees may be formed as necessary and prudent.

### **Section 2. Clubs & Student Organizations (CSO)**

1. This committee's charge shall be to:
  - a. Distributing designated funds to the clubs and student organizations of MSU, with approval of the Senate, as deemed appropriate.
2. Membership shall include a non-voting advisor and the following voting members:
  - a. Chair: Vice President of Finance
  - b. Four or more other members of the SGA.
3. The Chair shall:
  - a. Call an initial meeting, no later than six weeks after the semester begins, which one representative from each fund-seeking club or organization must attend.
  - b. Call no more than one meeting per month, unless necessary,
4. Each club and organization with a proposal must ensure the following before the proposal will be heard by this committee:
  - a. A club representative must have perfect attendance at CSO meetings in the current semester to apply.
  - b. The proposal shall be submitted one week before the initial CSO meeting.
  - c. The student organization's most current constitution shall have been submitted to the SGA or be on file one week prior to the initial CSO meeting.
  - d. The student organization's proposal must abide by all university funding policies.
  - e. The organization must not be already receiving student activity fee monies.

### **Section 3. NDSA Committee**

1. This committee's charge shall be to:
  - a. Represent the MSU student body at the monthly NDSA meetings with no less than six delegates and provide a report to the Senate.
2. Membership shall include:
  - a. Chair: Vice President of State Affairs.
  - b. Five or more other Officials of the SGA or current students.

#### **Section 4. Constitutional Review Committee**

1. This committee shall revise the SGA Constitution with approval of the Senate, as necessary.
2. Membership and committee chair shall be appointed by the President, with senate approval.

#### **Section 5. Student Outreach Committee**

1. This committee's charge shall be to:
  - a. Administer surveys to give SGA an accurate interpretation of student opinion.
  - b. Host student outreach events no less than once per month,
  - c. Implement and execute face-to-face recruitment strategies.
  - d. Advertise SGA initiatives through a variety of mediums.
2. Membership shall include:
  - a. Chair: Vice President of Internal Affairs
  - b. Vice Chair: shall be elected within the committee.
  - c. Four additional members of the SGA.

#### **Section 6. Election Committee**

1. The Election Committee shall be formed by the President in the spring semester.
2. The Election Committee shall facilitate the Spring Election before the final Friday in March.
3. This committee's charge shall be to:
  - a. Organize and facilitate the Spring General Election
  - b. Recommend and facilitate a Fall or Midterm General Election if necessary.
  - c. Facilitate and regulate nominations, campaigning, and the election process
  - d. May make recommendation to president to filling all vacancies in the Senate.
4. Membership shall include:
  - a. Chair: SGA Advisor
  - b. One Senator representing the College of Arts & Sciences.
  - c. One Senator representing the College of Education & Health Sciences.
  - d. One Senator representing the College of Business.
  - e. Two Senators representing the Senate at large.

### **Article XI. Constitutional Amendments**

#### **Section 1. Amendment Procedure**

1. Any current SGA member may propose an amendment.
2. Upon being brought before the Senate, the proposed amendment shall be tabled without discussion until the meeting.
3. The proposed amendment shall be submitted to the Red & Green upon request.
4. If the proposed amendment is defeated by the Senate, the student has a right to petition.
5. A two-thirds vote by the Senate will approve all proposed amendments.

#### **Section 2. Alternative Amendment Procedure**

1. Any current student may petition an amendment if they obtain 300 or more student signatures.
2. An accepted petition will be voted on by the student body.
3. Approval or disapproval of the petitioned amendments will be decided by a simple majority of the voting student body.

### **Article XII. Enabling Act**

1. This Constitution shall take effect upon approval by two-thirds of the members present at the meeting, assuming quorum is met.